

## Overview

The concept of the “Stay Alert. Stay Alive” informational campaign was initially recommended to Governor Haley Barbour in a briefing conducted by his staff in February 2006 with the following three major goals:

1. To show people in Mississippi, particularly along the Gulf Coast, that the Governor and, in fact, the whole of state government are concerned for their safety in the upcoming hurricane season;
2. To provide valuable, life-saving information to heighten residents’ awareness of how to best survive the next disaster, reducing the risks of damage and helping people recover more quickly.
3. To communicate certain elements of a newly revised statewide disaster plan, illustrating that with education, preparation, forecasting and coordination, lives can be saved.

Based on major elements of the disaster plan and working with various state agencies, non-profits, faith-based organizations and other interests, the communication campaign was designed to get specific information to targeted audiences. These audiences included the general public, school children, civic clubs, and community groups.

Over an eight-week period leading up to the official start of the 2006 hurricane season on June 1, the campaign broke major elements down into more easily digestible parts, emphasizing one topic a week and covering such topics as warnings and evacuations; family disaster plans, including emergency kits, escape routes and transportation; housing and emergency shelter; insurance, mental health, business-related issues and pet-related issues.

Governor Barbour kicked off the campaign at a news conference in a Salvation Army tent on the Mississippi Coast on April 6. Several agency representatives participated, including the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Guard, Mississippi Department of Health, Mississippi Department of Transportation, and others.

The Governor issued a proclamation designating April 6, 2006 – June 2, 2006 for the statewide hurricane awareness campaign, urging all government agencies, private organizations, news media and residents in hurricane-prone areas to share information and hurricane preparedness and response.

The message is being communicated by printed materials, such as a door-hanger placed on the doors of every FEMA travel trailer and mobile home; the door hangers featured disaster preparedness tips, reminded tenants of an evacuation survey phone line and urge residents not to tow or move their travel trailer during an evacuation. In addition, the campaign coordinated newspaper ads, civic club speakers, media interviews and press releases, along with Public Service Announcements.

The awareness campaign is a partnership of the Governor's office and various state agencies, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency. Each of the organizations are combining and coordinating their hurricane awareness efforts so that all Mississippi residents, government agencies and businesses are prepared for the 2006 season.